

Louis Amato-Gauci

Partner

Toronto

OFFICE

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Industries & Expertise

INDUSTRIES

Automotive | Major Projects | Franchising & Distribution | Retail | Transportation & Logistics

EXPERTISE

Corporate Law | Mergers & Acquisitions | Private Equity | ESG and Carbon Finance | Global Trade and Customs

Biography

BAR ADMISSION

Ontario, 2000

EDUCATION

- J.D., University of Toronto Faculty of Law, 1998
- B.A., University College, University of Toronto, 1995

LANGUAGES SPOKEN

English, Maltese

Louis is the go-to lawyer for those seeking responsive, strategic, and proactive legal counsel in the field of transportation law. Focusing on mergers and acquisitions and corporate governance, Louis has extensive

experience navigating transactions on behalf of Canadian and international companies in the transport, logistics, automotive, pharmaceutical, technology, retail and manufacturing industries, among others. He is frequently consulted on matters of transport regulatory compliance, licensing and safety, assisting clients with operating procedures and contracting practices in the air, road and rail modes of transportation, as well as in the warehousing and logistics sectors. Manufacturers, importers, exporters and freight forwarders also turn to Louis for customs and trade advice on the movement of goods and services across international borders.

Louis's deep knowledge is not only showcased in his legal practice but also through his speaking engagements and educational contributions. Renowned for his insights, he shares his skills and experience on various platforms, covering topics ranging from trade policies to transportation trends, attesting to his commitment to continuous learning and sharing knowledge within the legal community.

Apart from his leadership in transportation law, Louis is a trusted advisor for companies on corporate structure, governance, and contractual negotiations. With a client-centered approach, Louis ensures that each step taken aligns with the client's best interests and long-term goals.

Industry involvement

Recognition

- Lawyer of the Year, *Best Lawyers in Canada*, 2018, 2020 and 2025
 - Transportation Law (Toronto)
- *Recognized as a Thomson Reuters Stand-out lawyer*, 2023-2024
- *Transportation Lawyers Association* – Distinguished Service Award, 2016
- *Canadian Legal Lexpert® Directory*
 - Transportation (Road and Rail) – “Most Frequently Recommended”
 - Corporate Commercial Law – “Repeatedly Recommended”
- *Chambers Canada*
 - Transportation: Rail & Road, Nationwide (Canada)
- *The Best Lawyers in Canada*
 - Aviation Law
 - Transportation Law
- *Lexpert® Guide to US/Canada Cross-Border Lawyers in Canada*
 - Trade – “Most Frequently Recommended”

Thought leadership

Presentations

- Speaker, "CUSMA – What You Need To Know for Autos and More," Canadian Society of Customs Brokers (CSCB) Webinar Series, June 17, 2020
- Co-chair and moderator, "Foreign Trade Zones," CLE Webinar Series, June 16 – 28, 2020
- Speaker, "CUSMA – New Agreement, New Reality for Customs Brokers and Importers," CSCB Webinar, February 20, 2020
- Speaker, "USMCA: E-Commerce Opportunities and Headwinds," IMAG Quarterly Meeting, Miami, February 16, 2020
- Speaker, "What Can You Expect as USMCA Crosses the Finish Line?," NCBFAA, Webinar, February 6, 2020
- Panelist, "USMCA and Trade Policy Changes," Canada Logistics Conference, Niagara Falls ON, October 25, 2019
- Speaker, "M&A in North America: Current Trends and What Canadian Transport Lawyers Should Know," 2019 Annual Conference of the Canadian Transport Lawyers Association, Winnipeg MB, September 21, 2019
- Speaker, "B2C...And back Again," Association of Transportation Law Professionals 90th Annual Meeting, Washington DC, June 11, 2019
- Speaker, "What's Next for USMCA?," NCBFAA Educational Institute, Webinar, May 16, 2019
- Educational Program Committee, TLA Annual Conference & CTLA Mid-Year Meeting, Transportation Lawyers Association (U.S.). Austin TX: May 1 – 5, 2019
- Moderator, "The Polar Code: The New Rules of the Road of the Arctic and Antarctic Navigation – How the Risks Inherent in Polar Shipping Are Changing," Transportation Lawyers Association's Annual Conference, Austin TX, May 4, 2019
- Speaker, "The Ties That Bind: Tariffs and Trade Wars and Their Impact on Supply Chains and the Transportation Industry," Transportation Lawyers Association's Annual Conference, Austin TX, May 3, 2019
- Speaker, "Tariffs and Trade Wars and Their Impact on Supply Chains and the Transportation Industry," Women in International Trade Los Angeles, Webinar, April 30, 2019
- Speaker, "Mergers, Acquisitions and the OHTB Process," Ontario Transportation Expo, Toronto ON, April 15, 2019
- Speaker, "What's in a Name? NAFTA becomes the USMCA," National Customs Brokers & Forwarders Association of America. Webinar: November 15, 2018
- Moderator, "Acquire or Be Acquired: Transactions in the Transport World," Canadian Transport Lawyers Association. Annual Conference, Montréal QC: October 26, 2018
- Speaker, "Hopes and Fears for NAFTA: A Three-Country Perspective," National Customs Brokers & Forwarders Association of America. Webinar: July 12, 2018

- Moderator, "Coming up Next: NAFTA 2.0, No NAFTA, or Zombie NAFTA?", 89th Annual Meeting of the Association of Transportation Law Professionals, Washington D.C.: June 11, 2018
- Educational Program Committee, 89th Annual Meeting of the Association of Transportation Law Professionals, Washington D.C.: June 11 – 12, 2018
- Speaker, "NAFTA and Baseball: Different Game, Same Goal," Transportation Lawyers Association (U.S.) Annual Conference, Orlando FL: May 5, 2018
- Moderator, "NAFTA Modernization and its Impact on Energy and Trade," Marine Energy Symposium of the Americas 2018. Toronto ON: April 19, 2018
- Speaker, "What to Expect from Upcoming NAFTA Talks," National Customs Brokers & Forwarders Association of America. Webinar: April 12, 2018
- Moderator, "NAFTA Update: The Effects of Modernization on Transportation," 18th Annual Fernandes Hearn Seminar. Toronto ON: January 17, 2018
- Speaker, "New Solutions for Old Obstacles – Cross-Border Motor Carrier Operations in North America," Transportation Lawyers Association (U.S.), Annual Conference. Santa Fe NM: April 27, 2017
- Speaker, "Emerging Customs Issues," 17th Annual Fernandes Hearn Seminar. Toronto ON: January 19, 2017.
- Speaker, "Safety Plans, Due Diligence and Infractions in Trucking," 17th Annual Fernandes Hearn Seminar. Toronto ON: January 19, 2017
- Speaker, "Round Table Modal Updates: Truck, Bus, Marine, Air, & Rai," Canadian Transport Lawyers Association. Annual Conference, Toronto ON: September 24, 2016
- Chair – Educational Program, "Fun, Sun and CLE: Mining for Diamonds on the Emerald Coast," Transportation Lawyers Association (U.S.). Annual Conference, Destin FL: April 26 – 30, 2016
- Speaker, "Drafting Transborder Transportation Contracts," Canadian Transport Lawyers Association. Annual Conference, Kelowna BC: October 3, 2015
- Speaker, "Ethics: Are Lawyers Vanishing?," Transportation Lawyers Association (U.S.). Annual Conference, St. Petersburg FL: May 3, 2014
- Chair – Educational Program, "The St. Lawrence River: The Essential Artery / Le fleuve Saint-Laurent: l'indispensable artère," Canadian Transport Lawyers Association. Annual Conference, Québec City: September 19 – 21, 2013
- Speaker, "Canadian Cross-Border Transportation Issues: Trucking," 84th Annual Meeting of the Association of Transportation Law Professionals. Atlantic Beach FL: June 26, 2013
- Moderator, "Ethics: In Vino Veritas," Transportation Lawyers Association (U.S.). Annual Conference, Napa CA: May 4, 2013
- Speaker, "Transactions Involving Transport Companies," Canadian Transport Lawyers Association. Annual Conference, Toronto ON: September 27, 2012
- Speaker, "Bills of Lading Act: An Overview," Delta Nu Alpha. Brampton ON: March 22, 2012

- Speaker, “Ethical Issues of Transportation Attorneys: Lawyers’ Communications with Judges and Juries,” Transportation Lawyers Association (U.S.). Regional Seminar on Transportation Law & Litigation, Chicago IL: January 20, 2012
- Speaker, “\$2.00/lb Maximum Carrier Liability: Where Does That Leave the Broker?”, National Transportation Brokers Association. Mississauga ON: January 20, 2011
- Speaker, “Cross Border Security Issues: The Impact of e-Manifest on Canadian and American Motor Carriers,” Canadian Transport Lawyers Association. Annual Conference, Québec City: September 26, 2008
- Moderator: “Developing Issues in Commercial Transactions: (i) Getting the Deal Done: Canadian Regulatory Approvals in relation to M&A in the Transportation Industry; and (ii) Emerging Due Diligence Considerations in a Security Conscious World,” Canadian Transport Lawyers Association. Annual Conference, Toronto ON: September 15, 2006
- Speaker: “Homeland Security: Are We Safer Now?”, Transportation Lawyers Association (U.S.). Annual Conference, Indian Wells CA: May 12, 2005
- Moderator: “Customs: Sorting out the New Buzzwords; Update on the U.S. Homeland Security Act; and Immigration: Recent Developments,” Canadian Transport Lawyers Association. Annual Conference, Toronto ON: December 5, 2002
- Educational Program Committee: “The North American Common Security Perimeter: A Viable Vision?”, Canadian Transport Lawyers Association. Annual Conference, Toronto ON: December 5 – 8, 2002

Publications

- “’Tis the Season: For a Spike in Cargo Theft”, Private Motor Carrier Magazine, Vol. 8, Issue 5 – Winter 2020, pp 32-34
- “Legal Perspectives on a Global Pandemic: COVID-19 as a ‘Teachable Moment’ for Carriers”, Miller Thomson’s Transportation & Logistics Communique, September 8, 2020
- “New safety guidance for commercial vehicle operations during COVID-19”, Miller Thomson’s Transportation & Logistics Communique, April 6, 2020
- “On the front line: Keeping supply chains moving despite COVID-19”, Miller Thomson’s Transportation & Logistics Communique, March 31, 2020
- “COVID-19: Exemptions: Hours of services; TDG; Quebec spring thaw weight restrictions”, Miller Thomson’s Transportation & Logistics Communique, March 31, 2020
- “Safety Plans and Due Diligence for Motor Carriers: When is Enough, Enough?”, The Navigator: October 2017 (Toronto: Fernandes Hearn LLP) pp. 23-25.
- “Guidance Regarding the Boundaries of Personal Liability of Directors for Oppression,” The Navigator: July 2017 (Toronto: Fernandes Hearn LLP) pp. 14-16.
- “Bye-Bye to the Bulk Sales Act?”, The Navigator: July 2016 (Toronto: Fernandes Hearn LLP) pp. 16-19.
- “Preparing to Sell a Family-Owned Transportation Business,” The Navigator: April 2016 (Toronto: Fernandes Hearn LLP) pp. 1-5.

- “At the Crossroads: Trucking, Government and the Canada—U.S. Border,” *Journal of Transportation Law, Logistics and Policy*: 2013 Volume 80, No. 4, pp. 241-253.
- “Mergers and Acquisitions involving Transportation Undertakings in Canada: Due Diligence, Representations, Warranties and Covenants,” *The Transportation Lawyer*: December 2012, Volume 14, No. 3, pp. 58-74.
- Co-Editor, *The Transportation Lawyer*, a joint publication of the Transportation Lawyers Association (U.S.) and the Canadian Transport Lawyers Association. – Volume 8, No. 3 (December 2006) to Volume 9, No. 2 (October 2007).
- “Update from the Provinces,” Co-Author with Alex MacWilliam, Daniel P. Ryall, Stéphanie Thibault and Keith D. Kilback. *The Transportation Lawyer*: August 2004, Volume 6, No. 1, pp. 53-59.
- “Changes to the Regulation of the Transportation of Alcohol and Tobacco in Canada,” Co-Author with Sky Jondahl. *The Transportation Lawyer*: October 2003, Volume 5, No. 2, pp. 59-61.
- “Prospects for Canada’s Film Industry: Will There be a Sweet Hereafter or is this As Good As It Gets?,” in M.J. Trebilcock, ed., *The Working Papers Series* (Toronto: Centre for the Study of State and Market, 1998).

Notable matters

- Represented one of North America’s largest school bus operators in its first cross-border acquisition, the purchase of a family-owned school and charter bus company with operations in 12 urban and rural centres in south western Ontario.
- Represented Stord, Inc. in the acquisition of ProPack Logistics, a Vancouver-based provider of multichannel fulfillment, last-mile shipping, and value-added and reverse logistics services.
- Represented Qikiqtaaluk Fisheries Corporation in the negotiation of a shipbuilding contract with Freire Shipyard (Vigo, Spain) for the construction of the Saputi II, a factory-freezer fishing trawler.
- Provided regulatory advice to the vendors in the sale to Kuehne+Nagel Group of Farrow, a family-owned business with over 110 years of experience in customs brokerage, trade consulting, and integrated logistics services, and operating locations across Canada the United States, and Europe.
- Represented Radiant Logistics Inc., an NYSE-listed public company that is one of the top-50 largest freight brokerage firms in the United States, and its wholly-owned Canadian subsidiary Wheels International Inc., in the acquisition of Lomas Logistics, a third-party logistics company that provides specialized services to the consumer goods, healthcare and technology industry, with operations in Ontario and British Columbia.
- Represented a leading U.S. provider of in-store merchandising solutions in its first cross-border acquisition, involving Canada’s leading marketer and distributor of quality, on-trend impulse products, servicing over 7,000 retail locations.
- Represented LeasePlan Canada Ltd., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Foss National Leasing Ltd., in the negotiation and implementation of a licensing agreement with LeasePlan Corporation N.V., a fleet management and driver mobility company with over 1.3 million vehicles in 31 countries.
- Acted for SIRVA, Inc., in the restructuring of its Canadian subsidiaries and household moving operations.

- Represented Stock Transportation Ltd., a subsidiary of National Express Group PLC, in the acquisition of Northstar Passenger Services LP from Contrans Income Fund, a freight haulage company based in Woodstock, Ontario. Northstar, a school bus contractor based in Barrie, Ontario, had a fleet of 800 school buses and 850 employees.
- Acted for a German open-ended mutual fund, in connection with the \$263 million acquisition of commercial real estate in Toronto.
- Represented a start-up company in the negotiation of an exclusive distribution agreement with a European manufacturer of scooters and motorcycles, and with the development of its dealer network across Canada.
- Acted for a private equity investor in a \$6.8 million investment in a leading provider of online search and registration services to the legal, financial and business communities.
- Acted for a private equity investor in a \$5.4 million investment in a biopharmaceutical company with operations in the United States and Canada.
- Negotiated with CN on behalf of a large Ontario municipality in a dispute concerning maintenance obligations and rights of way arising under contracts entered into in 1905 and 1906.
- Negotiated confidential contracts with each of CN and CP for the transportation of commodities on behalf of large shippers with operations across Canada including major retailers.
- Advised shortline railways in connection with legislative amendments; running rights; railway crossing agreements; anti-whistle bylaws; interswitching; and safety compliance.
- Provided legal advice to various municipalities, shippers and other stakeholders in connection with rail line discontinuance and abandonment.
- Provided legal advice and representation to a port authority with regard to proposed changes to the use and management of its railway lines.
- Negotiated with CNR on behalf of a start-up company in connection with the development and operation of North America's first purpose-built transload facility at CN's MacMillan Rail Yard, for the processing and carriage by rail of construction, demolition, industrial, commercial and institutional waste.
- Advised a publicly-traded European transport and logistics conglomerate regarding the restructuring of its Canadian subsidiaries, to streamline ongoing compliance and reporting obligations.
- Lead counsel in a series of strategic acquisitions by a large reseller and hauler of bulk fuels based in the Northeastern United States. The target companies were mainly family-owned tank truck carriers located in South, Central and Eastern Ontario.
- Represented a U.K. public company in series of strategic acquisitions of family-owned businesses with extensive contracts for the provision of school bus services in Alberta, Ontario and Nova Scotia.

Community roles

- Founding Member, The Urban Orchestra

Memberships & affiliations

- American Bar Association
- Association of Transportation Law Professionals (President)
- Canadian Bar Association
- Canadian Transport Lawyers Association (President 2008 – 2009)
- ieCanada – Canadian Association of Importers and Exporters
- Law Society of Ontario
- Transportation Lawyers Association
- Private Motor Truck Council of Canada